

Minutes
Delaware Council of Faith-Based Partnerships Meeting
Tuesday, November 4, 2014
1-3 pm
Congregation Beth Shalom
1801 Baynard Boulevard
Wilmington, DE, 19802

Attendees: Jen Hill, Doug Gerdts, Michael Beals, John Moore, Usman Sandhu, Flora McConkie, Kenny Foster, Jeanne Cashman, Raina Harper Allen.

Guest presenter: Jay Lynch, Deputy Principal Assistant to the Secretary, Delaware Health and Social Services.

The meeting was called to order by Doug at approx. 1:05 pm.

Introductions.

Presentation from Jay Lynch regarding Re-entry Issues and I-ADAPT (Individual Assessment, Discharge and Planning Team). In May of 2009, Governor Markell signed executive order on “Reducing Recidivism and Creating I-ADAPT,” with goal to reduce crime by reducing the number of repeat offenders, utilizing coordination between State agencies and community organizations. Cabinet-level team, including representatives from Department of Correction, Delaware State Housing Authority, Department of Labor, Department of Education, and Department of Health and Social Services. Also seeking input from faith community and ex-offenders. Current chair is Secretary Landgraff, DHSS. Jay has been specifically assigned to coordinate effort.

Excerpts from executive order (emphasis added):

...about 97 percent of offenders in Delaware prisons will be released back into society, and currently, 57 percent serve more than one year with an average length of stay of 20.8 months, 24 percent serve less than one year with an average length of stay of 63.1 days and 19 percent are in detention status...

it costs about \$33,000 a year to incarcerate one inmate, and prisons are 20 times more costly than probation...

...over the next two years approximately 2,800 sentenced adult inmates will be released from Delaware's prisons, and approximately 70 percent will be on some form of community-based supervision...

...recently released inmates can face a number of problems that could lead them back to criminal activity, such as homelessness, a lack of job skills, limited education, lack of transportation to get to work and trouble finding work because of their criminal history...

...by working together among state agencies and community organizations, the Department of Correction could gather all the necessary information to develop individualized re-entry plans for each inmate based on their specific situation...

- (a) Increase **availability and access to services** within five identified re-entry pillars - Housing, Employment, Human Services, Education and Community Integration - through streamlining current processes and utilizing existing resources.*
- (b) Create a standardized **process for documenting offenders' entry to and release** from the Department of Correction, **identifying gaps in the services provided and opportunities for improvement**.*
- (c) Develop a re-entry Memorandum of Understanding, which may be amended or supplemented from time-to-time, between and among State government agencies to **enhance and streamline the delivery of necessary services** in a manner that requires clear expectations and accountability.*
- (d) Implement an accountability system that will annually monitor the plan's successes, detail opportunities for improvement, and assist in the development and implementation of best practices.*
- (e) Work to **equip individuals released from custody with the tools needed to succeed in the community**.*
- (f) Build a **continuum of custody, care, and control for all offenders** who are under a community-based supervision sentence, and especially those offenders who are discharged from the custody of the Department of Correction.*
- (g) Identify how **state agencies and the community can work together** to improve offender accountability and to require personal responsibility for achieving self-sufficiency.*
- (h) Divide into **five teams** - Statewide Oversight, City of Wilmington, New Castle County, Kent County and Sussex County - for the purpose of focusing available resources in each of those areas.*
- (i) Strive to improve public safety by **reducing recidivism by 50 percent within a five-year period** and decreasing re-victimization in our communities.*

First I-ADAPT client in 2010. Currently working with 2,000 released clients and 700 incarcerated clients.

Clients must be sentenced or incarcerated for a year or more and begin program 6-9 months prior to release. Program is budget neutral. Jay works with 100 State employees in various departments to coordinate services. Federal grants (for sex offender housing, for instance) have been utilized.

Jay receives a list of those who are eligible to participate and alerts prisoners about the program, inviting them to participate at monthly meetings in each prison. Participants receive his cell phone number (302.540.4979), so problems and issues can be resolved quickly. (For instance, probation appointment and mental health counseling scheduled on same day, and requiring transportation not available to client. With a phone call, Jay can assist with rescheduling one of the appointments, so parole is not violated.) Clients respond to the one-on-one help.

Some qualify to participate, but do not follow through with applications, phone calls, etc. Support provided in the first few months makes a difference.

There are approx. 18,000 annual entries/exits from Delaware corrections facilities. Most are the same individuals repeating the process. About one third are one-time offenders. Many from drug possession, use and sales. Most from burglary, particularly drug-related.

Average education level is 8-10th grade. (Note: Delaware does not recognize GED as a high school diploma.) Sixty to eighty percent have mental health or addiction issues. Many have no identifying documents. Family issues (multiple spouses/girlfriends/children from various relationship) require help with family re-unification, parenting skills, custody and child support. Often anger management, trust issues, and basic life skills need attention.

Differences in youth re-entry and adult re-entry noted. Those ages 35-55 are more likely to desire change and be weary of criminal lifestyle.

Clients use a workbook at monthly meetings to chart progress.

Program is accessible in all units and all wardens work with it.

Services available include: housing, education, interview and job skills, addiction recovery programs, health needs, disability needs, mental health needs, family issues, driver's license/ID, bus passes.

As part of the program, clients must report to Department of Labor within 2 weeks of release. As a result, I-ADAPT participants have a higher employment rate.

Mental health services are provided by Connections Community Support Programs. A 30-day supply of medications is provided at release. Health benefits are pre-processed so there is no lapse in treatment.

In Kent and Sussex Counties, Delaware State Housing Authority is utilized. In New Castle County, various city housing programs are used.

Regarding item (h) in executive order, currently there are four I-ADAPT teams: one in each county and one for Wilmington. Ideally, each team includes representatives from each Department (on Re-entry Committee), community and faith leaders, and an ex-offender. Only active group is in Kent County. (Kenny has attended the Kent County meetings.)

Role for faith communities in mentoring, in development of and service on “community coalitions/teams,” and with providing services (housing assistance, job training, educational programs, family support, care packages for newly-released, etc.).

Also possible opportunity for supporting legislation creating a Delaware Office of Re-Entry (DORE) in DHSS.

DCFBP re-entry/recidivism committee (Raina, Max, Kenny, Jeanne) assigned to discuss possible Council involvement and return with proposals.

Jay to present at an upcoming “Lunch and Learn” and to meet with DCFBP representatives on Council proposals.

Doug to draft letter in support of I-ADAPT legislation.

“Lunch and Learn” series discussed. To be held in conjunction with Council’s monthly meetings (first Tuesday of the month). For instance, Lunch and Learn from 12-1 pm and Council meeting from 1-3 pm or 1-2:30pm.

First Lunch and Learn on March 3rd with Housing, at Carvel Building in Wilmington. Boxed lunch (Subway sandwiches) suggested. April 7th with Jay Lynch (tentative) and May 5th topic TBA. Raina noted that May is National Foster Care month. John suggested a possible autumn Lunch and Learn at Stephenson House.

Fall dates for Lunch and Learns: September 1st, October 6th, and November 3rd.

Minutes from October meeting approved.

Next meeting. Tuesday, December 2, 2014. [Subsequently cancelled.]

Meeting adjourned at approx. 3 pm.

Submitted by Flora McConkie, DCFBP Secretary, January 6, 2015.